

Marketing strategies for academic libraries

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Abstract

This assignment is about the development of a general strategic marketing plan for academic libraries in Germany and can be used as a guideline for libraries that want to develop concrete marketing strategies for several products and services. Two examples of marketing projects are at its end presented for linking theoretical approaches to practice.

Finally the development of an own marketing strategy for “information literacy” builds the last part of the assignment.

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Abbreviations

3M	<i>Company “3M library systems” (Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company)</i>
4 C's	<i>Abbreviation for customer solution, customer cost, convenience and communication</i>
4 P's	<i>Abbreviation for product, price, place, promotion</i>
ACRL	<i>Association of College & Research Libraries</i>
ALA	<i>American Library Association</i>
BCG matrix	<i>Boston Consulting Growth matrix</i>
COMBI	<i>Controlling und Marketing in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken</i>
DFG	<i>Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft</i>
e.g.	<i>for example</i>
e.V.	<i>eingetragener Verein</i>
EDBI	<i>ehemaliges Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut</i>
etc.	<i>et cetera</i>
f	<i>following</i>
i.e.	<i>id est (that is)</i>
ibid.	<i>ibidem</i>
IFLA	<i>International Federation of Library Associations</i>
JASON	<i>Journal Articles Sent On demaNd</i>
KVK	<i>Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog</i>
NedGuide	<i>Short name for “Virtuelle Bibliothek niederländischer Kulturkreis“</i>
NRW	<i>Northrhine-Westphalia</i>
OPAC	<i>Online Public Access Cataloguing</i>
p	<i>page</i>
PDF	<i>Portable Document Format</i>
PERT	<i>Program Evaluation and Review Technique</i>
PISA	<i>Program for International Student Assessment</i>
SteFi	<i>Studieren mit elektronischer Fachinformation</i>
Subito	<i>Subito – Dokumente aus Bibliotheken e.V.</i>
SWOT	<i>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (analysis)</i>
UB	<i>Universitätsbibliothek (university library)</i>
ULB	<i>Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek (university- and regional library)</i>
URL	<i>Uniform Resource Locator</i>
USA	<i>United States of America</i>
Vol.	<i>Volume</i>

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Introduction

Marketing in German academic libraries becomes nowadays more and more important, because they have to defend themselves to their financing institutions. Academic libraries have to fight for their existence, because in times of short revenue the governments of the federal states have reduced university budgets during the last years.

In this situation marketing strategies can help academic libraries to plan their future and to find their position on the market. Other countries like the USA, where educational and cultural institutions have never been subsidized by the state to the same extent as in Germany, have developed this field very early and have due to this fact a lot of experiences Germany should use.

It is the aim of this assignment to show that it is possible to develop a general strategic marketing plan for academic libraries, which can be used as a guideline for libraries that want to develop concrete marketing strategies for several products and services.

The first part gives an overview about the situational background of German academic libraries. The development of a general strategic marketing plan builds the second part, where a great store is set to link the several marketing steps to the German situation.

The third part deals with marketing projects that have been carried out or are being carried out in the library sector. It was considered as useful to describe a German and an American project. A German one, because the main focus of this assignment is set on German academic libraries and an American one, because the Americans are the forerunners.

The Federal Ministry of education subsidized the German project called COMBI ("Controlling und Marketing in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken"). It is the only German marketing project, which is documented in a so detailed way. But this very detailed documentation has the disadvantage that the reader does not get an overview about the structure a strategic marketing plan should have. In this assignment some parts of the project are described by using the structure of the strategic marketing plan outlined in the second chapter.

The American campaign *@ your library™* is chosen because of its topicality. The campaign supports the cooperation between American libraries in the development of marketing strategies successfully. It is planned to adapt this campaign to libraries world wide, so that it is worth to be described.

The fourth part of this assignment is then an own development of possible marketing strategies for services that help to improve the information literacy of students in Germany. The problem of “information literacy” belongs at the moment certainly to the most discussed topics not only in the library sector, but also on political level, caused by international studies (PISA) and – on university level – studies like “Studieren mit elektronischen Fachinformationen” (SteFi). It is necessary for academic libraries to make students aware of this problem and to improve tutorials, which students do not use enough right now. Thus it is an interesting object for the development of a marketing strategy and is chosen for this assignment.

This assignment is a theoretical work based on analysing the literature that has been published for the last ten years. Due to the fact that the development in the field of marketing is always in progress, it was considered to be useful to use literature with newest approaches only. In addition to that strategies are meant for planning the future, so that the main emphasis is put on the future aspect and the potential for academic libraries lying in it. The history of marketing development is of course also an exciting field, but would be beyond the scope of this work.

Instead of the long version “academic library” the terms “library” and the plural “libraries” are used for it synonymously.

The Harvard system is used for citations, but footnotes for explanations and URLs are sometimes used additionally.

1 The situation of academic libraries in Germany

The following part gives a short overview about the current situation of academic libraries in Germany and as a result of it the importance of strategic marketing for academic libraries.

1.1 Definition

“Academic library” means one specific type of libraries. The other types are public and special libraries. Special libraries include e.g. corporate, government, institution, law, and medical libraries.

All these libraries have much in common: most of them are non-profit institutions and as parts of big organizations they serve them on a scientific level. But there are also many differences that are constituted in different target groups and therefore different missions.

An academic library can be defined as “a library that is an integral part of a college, university, or other institution of post-secondary education, administered to meet the information and research needs of its students, faculty, and staff.” (ODLIS, 2002)

1.2 Mission

The university library has to ensure that first of all members of the university, i.e. students, faculty and staff, get information they need for their work in every available form. Information “in every form” means physical (e.g. books and journals), electronic (e.g. CD-ROM databases, e-journals) and virtual (e.g. virtual libraries) information.

Above that, academic libraries participate in the German-wide interlibrary loan system called “Deutscher Leihverkehr” and also in the international interlibrary loan, i.e. that books and articles that are not available in the library a customer belongs to can be ordered and loaned out elsewhere. These services have proved their effectiveness and have now been working electronically for some years, so that the availability of information has become much better and faster than before. Thus libraries work not only in their local area but cooperate nation- and worldwide. The new technology Internet furthermore allows users to order books and articles themselves (s. 1.3.1).

Besides that libraries develop in projects new ways of bringing information to their customers. Digital and virtual libraries are keywords in that field.

1.3 Changing Environment

1.3.1 Technical change

Since the introduction of the computer and Internet technology the libraries' situation has been changing very fast. Libraries are on the way to become hybrid libraries. "Hybrid" (Latin) means two different origins (Meyers Lexikon, 1999). In this sense libraries have to offer besides physical information more and more electronic information. This sounds easier than it is: electronic information in form of (fulltext) databases or e-journals is very expensive and appears to be a big problem for a single university library. Consortia seem to be a solution: libraries in Germany merge and negotiate together with publishers of e-journals for reasonable prices.

Integrated systems make it possible that libraries cooperate also in cataloguing. For the library customers that becomes apparent by online-catalogues like the KVK¹ where not only the local collection is searchable, but also collections of all integrated systems in Germany.

The Internet is meanwhile the entrance to most of the services libraries present to their customers and links libraries and all kinds of scientific institutions. It is hence not required anymore to walk to the library for everything. That is one reason why the institution "library" is questioned very often. This is the problem libraries have to fight against, because the view that they are only places where knowledge is saved in old books is of course a wrong one. Libraries do not exclude new media, but they include them, thus complementing their traditional work.

1.3.2 Customer orientation

Marketing is customer oriented.

"The marketing concept emerged in the 1950s [...] Instead of a product-centered, 'make-and-sell' philosophy, we shift [nowadays – *author*] to a customer-centered, 'sense-and-respond' philosophy. Instead of 'hunting', marketing is 'gardening'. The

¹ KVK = Karlsruher Virtueller Katalog

job is not to find the right customers for your product, but the right products for your customers.” (Kotler, 2003, p.19)

The awareness of customer orientation in German academic libraries started late. They had for a long time a very high status and were not questioned at all – they were an essential part of the university and served everyone who *asked* them for help. But they did not offer special services of their own accord. The motto “everyone knows where the library is and who wants to get something from us will come to us” is not valid any longer. Fortunately this attitude does not exist anymore in most of the libraries.

However, the change in the state of mind, that the customer of the library is the most important factor to be successful, started late in German academic libraries.

Customer awareness does of course not mean, that the only responsibility of knowing the best products lies now in the hands of customers, who just have to be asked e.g. which databases they would like to use. The knowledge of products requests the professionalism of librarians! Librarians will be able to decide with competence which kind of information will be useful, if the information needs are known.

It is time for academic libraries to renew their guidelines or missions they have followed for years and bring them up-to-date, in the way, that the customers’ today needs are satisfied.

1.3.3 Financial problems

Non-profit organizations have got another very big problem: a financial one. Libraries have to fight with increasing costs, because the price of information especially in electronic form is rising steadily. They have to deal with more available information in general which also means that it costs time to edit it. But for everything they do they have a smaller amount of money. In Germany the federal states are responsible for all matters of education and cultural affairs. So the government of each federal state has to finance its educational institutions. The budget of university libraries is dependent from the financial decisions of universities’ administration, because as a part of them they get their money from there. In times of short revenue of taxation, money must be saved in each sector and the universities are not excluded.

In many universities a global budget has been introduced during the last years. The system of a global budget works like that: the university is given a total payment established in advance and covering a given period by their government. The management of a university decides then which department gets which amount of money – and the biggest part is most of the times spent on research and development fields like science, technology and medicine. Libraries have therefore to define new positions and have to defend themselves against the university management (Reinitzer, 2001). Furthermore they have to be aware of external information services that enter the information market. This has to be seen as a big chance and it is an argument for developing marketing strategies, which help libraries to find a new position. A marketing plan also helps to explicate the importance of the institution “library”, because specific goals the library wants to reach are defined in it.

1.4 Changing role of librarians

Librarians are often described as grey, shy persons sitting at the information desk and paying attention that library users keep silence, but do not know anything else going on in the world – it is an old cliché, but it still exists.

Even if people know better they are anyway often not able to say what librarians in an academic library are doing. Librarians are often not taken notice of. There is a chance to overcome this situation by defining and revealing new roles, because a changing environment causes changes in the librarians' work, too. Librarians are today information specialists and can expand their roles. Especially the role of teaching information literacy must be seen as a very important field of activity for the future. Librarians are representatives of libraries and the ones who can change the image of a library.

1.5 Conclusion

All mentioned circumstances show the fast changing situation of academic libraries today. To overcome arising problems libraries have to find solutions. One method can be the implementation of a strategic marketing plan. Academic libraries have started to make use of marketing methods used in the field of profit organizations and start to adopt them to non-profit organizations, because “in many cases the con-

siderations of the profit marketing can guide the marketing of the non-profit sector²” (Hobohm, 2002, part 3/4.1, p. 3). However, marketing is after all seen as something new in German academic libraries and is much discussed in articles and on conferences (e.g. will it be a topic on the coming IFLA conference in Berlin 2003, too³).

² original statement: *“in vielen Fragen können sich die Überlegungen des non-profit-Marketing [...] leiten lassen vom Marketing des kommerziellen Sektors”*

³ IFLA = International Federation of Library Association www.ifla.org ; the annual IFLA conference in 2003 will take place in Berlin from 1st – 9th August and has the motto “Access Point Library : Media – Information – Culture”

2 Marketing strategies for academic libraries

2.1 What is Marketing?

First of all, marketing is not the same as public relations and also not the same as selling. Selling and public relations are important parts of the whole marketing strategy. Many definitions exist for the term “Marketing”. Here are some:

“It is a planned strategic approach of bringing together consumers and products. A marketing oriented organization takes its marching orders from its customers; it produces products and services based on its customers’ needs, wants and levels of satisfaction. [...] Marketing is a strategic behaviour.” (Keiser, 1995, p. 50)

“Marketing management is the process of planning and executing programs designed to create, build, and maintain beneficial exchange relationships with target audiences for the purposes of satisfying individual and organizational objectives.” (Kotler, 1995, p. 37)

“Marketing is the management process which identifies, anticipates and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably” (Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK, cited by de Saez, 1993, p.1)

People working in different sectors (profit and non-profit) have given these definitions. They are all very alike: the main focus is set on customer orientation and satisfaction. Marketing helps organizations to get competitive advantages on their market. It helps an organization to plan and coordinate all its activities and to gain knowledge about customers, but also about itself. Customer orientation helps to find out the wishes and needs of a market and assists at the same time to be innovative in offering new services with the help of marketing instruments.

“A customer-centered organization is one that makes every effort to sense, serve, and satisfy the needs and wants of its clients and publics within the constraints of its budget.” (Kotler, 1995, p. 43)

The best way to carry out successful customer-oriented marketing is if all parts of an organization work together. This is then called *integrated marketing*. For an academic library it means that not only the marketing project-group is concerned with marketing problems. All departments have to think about their customers: the cataloguing department as well as the librarians at the information desk, the top management as well as the middle and lower management. All employees working in an

academic library have to think about the best way to serve their customers. It has to become their philosophy.

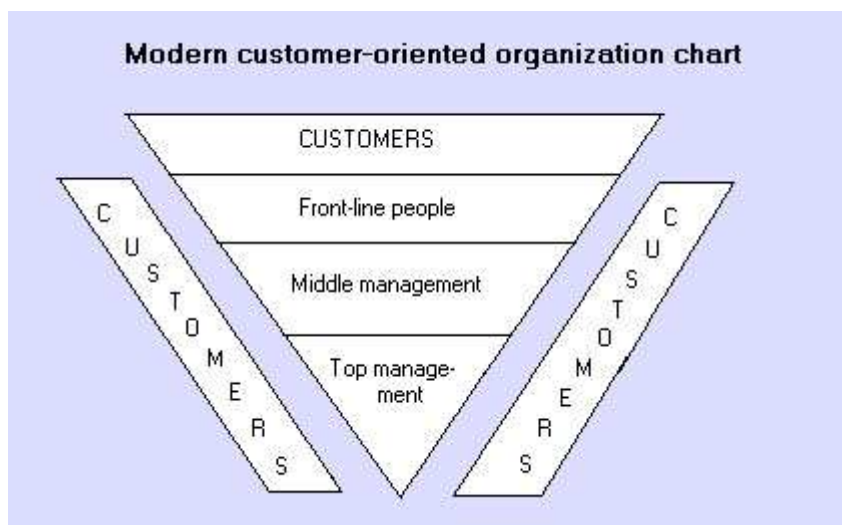


Fig.1 Integrated Marketing (Kotler 2003)

Figure 1 shows Kotler's scheme of the principle "think customer" and how it embraces an organization. The university library of Münster is a well-fitting example of using this principle of embracement: most of the offices are arranged around the places where customers are working and doing research. If they have a question which the librarian at the information desk cannot answer, she will of course send the customer directly to the person who is in charge of the subject and the room will be directly around the corner – thus will be visible and not out of sight. This "neighbourhood" makes it easier to follow the principle of "think customer".

As the name already says, non-profit organizations do not make profit, so that it is important not to forget the term "stakeholder". Not only the customer belongs to this category, but also those institutions that subsidize the library or single projects. They have a right to see that their money is invested effectively. The best way to do so is showing a marketing plan, where activities are described and planned in detail.

2.2 What is "Strategy"?

"Strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term, which achieves advantage for the organisation through its configuration of resources within

a changing environment and to fulfil stakeholder expectations.” (Johnson/Scholes, 2002, p. 10)

In other words, the development of a strategy enables an organization to define a clear route and direction it can follow to achieve goals. Strategic thinking gives answers to the questions “Where are we now?”, “Where do we go?”, and “How do we get there?”. Strategic planning is the following process where ideas are communicated and implemented.

Strategy creates value for an organization: on the one hand for customers, because they get the benefits customer-oriented activities; on the other hand for the organization itself, because strategy is meant for a long-term period and defines therefore the way of an organization for the following years.

2.3 Marketing strategies

Where do marketing and strategy meet each other?

“Marketing is a process of exchange” (Weingand, 1998, p.1).

A process has a starting-point, that is the current situation, and an ending-point, that is the successful implementation and visible result of set goals. Marketing management is not possible without strategic planning. Different services need different marketing strategies. It is therefore necessary for the academic library to plan several strategies for their services.

The *strategic-planning process* consists of the following steps:

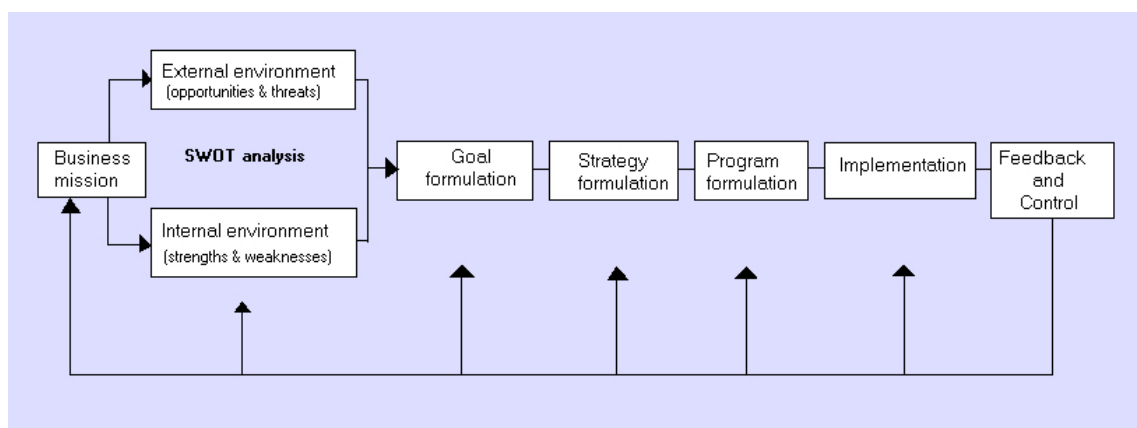


Fig. 2 The Strategic-Planning Process (Kotler, 2003)

It is important to know, that the steps actually build a chain, but they all refer to each other again and partly intersect.

In his book “Marketing for non-profit organizations” (1995) Kotler divides additionally the strategic marketing process into three central stages, which are the analysis, the strategy and the implementation.

The strategic planning process described in this assignment:

- **Analysis**
 - Self-assessment
 - Finding out the current situation
 - Environmental scanning
 - Clarifying the position and the mission
 - Market analysis
- **Strategy**
 - Market segmentation
 - Defining marketing goals/objectives
 - Defining a strategy for achieving goal
 - Using marketing instruments for formulating a program
- **Implementation and Evaluation**

Several useful methods help to work out a marketing plan. In this assignment the following methods will be described and used:

- A useful tool to analyse the current situation in an organization is the *SWOT analysis* (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).
- For the decision which strategy should be used to implement a product on the market, the method of *Ansoff* is considered to be useful.
- The Marketing-Mix consist of the “4 P’s” product, price, place, promotion, which helps to describe and plan the function of a product/service in detail
- For implementing strategies the PERT method (Program Evaluation and Review Technique) is useful.

2.4 The strategic marketing planning process for academic libraries

The following part describes in detail the steps that have to be undertaken in order to develop a strategic marketing plan and to carry it out. The general approaches used in the profit sector are then linked to the needs of an academic library as a non-profit organization.

2.4.1 Self-assessment

2.4.1.1 Defining the current situation

Who is responsible for defining the current situation? Weingand gives an approach that every planning structure should begin with the creation of a planning team that is composed of internal and external members of the environment (1993, p.5).

Internal members are employees of the library from all levels. External members are users of the library, i.e. students, professors, maybe also scientists working at the university.

It is useful to let the external members participate in analysing the current situation. But it is also clear that only a few external members can participate and that their impressions cannot be representative for the whole library. It is therefore not a substitution for a questionnaire on the campus where all customers are invited to participate.

Thus, two perspectives have to be evaluated: the external environment on the one hand, and the internal environment on the other hand. The external environment represents the customers' view on the library and its services and not to forget the universities' view (and maybe additional supporters) with their function as stakeholders. The internal environment shows the situation of the "library's view", that means its own view of its business including internal questions of financing, the role in between the whole organization, and the cooperation with other academic libraries.

The library has to find out and define:

- Who are our customers?
- How do library customers accept the library? Are they satisfied?
- How often do they come into the library?
- Which services do the customers know? Which services do they use?

- How do they evaluate the several services (collection, online resources, electronic resources)?
- Which problems do they see? Do they have any suggestions to overcome them?

The internal circumstances might be clearer, because they are more present to the library staff. The following questions might be useful:

- What is our business?
- What is our target group?
- What are we – at the moment – trying to achieve?
- Do we already have a kind of strategy?
- How will our situation change in the near future, e.g. because of restructuring of the whole university (keywords: global budget, changing environment)?

A very good help for analysing an organizations' current situation is the so-called SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis is a method for finding out the position of an organization and "allows the identification of needs, potential problems and issues and plays an important part in strategic planning" (Johnson, H., 1994, p. 9). SWOT is the abbreviation for **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats. Strengths and weaknesses are factors that refer to the internal environment of an organization, while opportunities and threats refer to the external environment of an organization.

	<i>Internal analysis</i>	<i>External analysis</i>
P O S I T I V E	Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teamwork influences workflow positive - Qualified research competences - Successful cooperation with other academic libraries 	Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional information delivery gets more and more important - Cooperation with other academic libraries strengthens own position - Innovative projects are supported and financed by government/funds
N E G A T I V E	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing costs, therefore financial situation bad - Inflexible organization hierarchy within a flexible market makes it hard to react on market developments 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customers think Internet can replace professional information services - Government reduces financing of educational institutions - Increasing costs of electronic information

Fig. 3 SWOT analysis (leaned on Hobohm, 2002)

2.4.1.2 Environmental scanning

“Environmental scanning” means analysing the macro environment of an organization. This analysis is important, because it is meant for looking into the future or, in other words, is the basis for strategic planning.

According to Kotler (1995, p. 91) non-profit managers have to “understand the broad forces creating the world in which they must operate. These broad forces can be divided into demographic, economic, technological, political-legal, and social-cultural categories.” The impact of these forces differs by the sector the organization is working in. Technological and political-legal trends are important influences on academic libraries in Germany. Technological trends, because of the fast development of Internet technologies, and political-legal trends, because the libraries are financed by their universities, which themselves are financed by the government of the federal states.

2.4.1.3 The mission statement

The *mission* is a short but precise sentence or paragraph by which the library has to explain its purpose of its business. Weingand (1998, p.30) has adopted the general business approach (consisting of the questions “What is our business? Who is the customer? What is of value to the customer? What will our business be?” (Kotler, 2003, p. 91)) to library needs. The following questions have therefore to be answered:

- Why does the library exist?
- Who are the customers?
- What services/products does the library offer?
- When and how can the library be used?
- Where does the library want to go by development?

Even it is a very short statement, the mission is really important, because the whole philosophy of an organization can be found in this statement. It is not only written for the marketing group, which is going on to develop a marketing plan, but also meant for the library personnel and the customers. Therefore it should be discussed again after being written down, so that everyone within the organization can agree on it.

The following short part of a mission statement belongs to the university library of Hildesheim, Germany⁴, belonging questions are written in italic by the author.

Our mission

(What is our business?) We are the scientific information centre of the university of Hildesheim. *(What services do we offer?)* We buy and analyse both printed and electronic media and special subject-oriented information in cooperation with educational institutions of the university and *(who are the customers?)* we present these information on the requirements of research, education and studies to the university of Hildesheim. We support and promote the access to scientific information by offering them also to interested external customers from the region.

2.4.2 Market analysis

Market analysis means finding out the market situation of the libraries' products and services.

Products and services have a certain life cycle with four periods: introduction, growth, maturity and decline (Kotler, 1995, p. 426). Libraries need to know the life cycles of their products in order to be able to choose the right strategy for marketing each product. The consumer behaviour also belongs to the market analysis, so the libraries have to find out which products and services are most used and valued by their customers.

2.4.3 Market segmentation

With building market segments, the strategic part of the planning process starts.

“Correct segmentation is the basis of your entire marketing strategy.”

(Coote, 1997, p. 9)

Market segmentation means, that the library has to specify groups of customers who share the same needs, wants and expectations. It will only be possible to define goals you want to achieve (which will be the next step), if you know these specific needs. Segmentation is furthermore a part of positioning the library.

⁴ full version (in German) available on <http://www.uni-hildesheim.de/UB/leitbild.html>
[downloaded at 14.04.2003]

The academic library serves three main groups of customers, which are the students, faculty and staff. But this is only a rough segmentation. More important are the differences among these groups, for example:

- A student studying medicine needs other kinds of information than a student studying theology, due to their different tasks.
- A student of the first year needs other literature (basics) than a student of a higher semester who needs specific, subject-oriented literature.

Basics for building segments can be e.g. the characteristics of people/organizations, the purchase/use situation and the users' needs and preferences (Johnson/Sholes, 2002, p. 131).

Summarized one can say that it is the knowledge about the customers' characteristics, which makes market segmentation possible. "It is important to see 'value' through the eyes of the customer." (*ibid.*)

An additional aspect of market segmentation is for an organization to decide how to target the segments. Kotler (1995, p. 182) defines three strategic choices: undifferentiated, differentiated and concentrated marketing.

"In undifferentiated marketing, the organization chooses not to recognize the different market segments making up the market. [...] Under differentiated marketing, an organization decides to operate in two or more segments of the market but designs separate offerings or marketing programs for each. [...] Concentrated marketing occurs when an organization decides to divide the market into meaningful segments and devote its major marketing effort to one or two segments. This is often referred to as 'niche marketing'."

The academic library should concentrate on differentiated marketing, because it offers many different products and services, which have different target groups among the university.

2.4.4 Setting goals and objectives

After the market segmentation it is now possible to set goals and objectives.

"Where do we want to go?" is the question that has to be answered.

There is a difference between the terms “goal” and “objective”. Goals can be defined as headers for the objectives. So, a goal is more general, and more than one objective can relate to one goal (Johnson, H., 1994, p. 9).

Looking at the general situation of academic libraries in Germany, as outlined in the first chapter, some problems are valid for each library:

- high costs for electronic information, but the problem that users often not know how to handle databases
- the problem of information literacy
- librarians have to cope with the fast changing environment and need tutorials themselves.

Problems that shall be solved must be converted into goals and objectives related to external (customer-oriented) and internal (staff-oriented) circumstances.

Example for customer-oriented goals:

Goal: to improve the information literacy of students by teaching them

Objective: develop new tutorials embedded in curricula

Objective: renew current tutorials

Objective: work hand in hand with educational institutions

Objective: development of short, understandable descriptions

Example for staff-oriented goals:

Goal: to improve the knowledge and competence of staff

Objective: offer possibility to participate in trainings for librarians

Objective: motivation through organization-wide accepted philosophy (mission!)

2.4.5 Formulating strategies

After having found a position and ideas which goals shall be achieved, the library needs concrete strategies to achieve those goals.

Different goals refer to different products/services. For every product and service an own strategy must be developed.

The formulation of strategies is dependent on their

- *Directions*, i.e. in which market direction strategies develop and
- *Methods*, i.e. in which way these strategies are carried out (Johnson/Scholes, 2002, p. 363, 374).

2.4.5.1 Directions

The matrix of Ansoff deals with the direction:

	Current Services/Products	New Services/Products
Current Markets	Market Penetration	Service/Product Development
New Markets	Market Development	Diversification

Fig. 4 Adaption of Ansoff's strategy matrix (de Saez, 1993)

Market penetration is a very important strategy of an organization, because it enables to establish services or products on the already existing market. It is a growing strategy. It is important for libraries to consolidate this kind of information. With market penetration an organization wants to achieve that their products and services are better or more used by their customers. The physical collection of an academic library is still its *cash cow* (s. 2.4.6.1).

Service/Product development is the strategy that should follow the market penetration. A new product or service will be developed and established on a current market. Digital and virtual libraries are examples for that development: these are portals on the Internet where online-catalogues, databases, and assembled Internet resources are available on one website. Above all the collection of Internet resources for specific topics are an important service, because it helps customers to find relevant qualitative high information. Those new services have to be seen as additions to existing services, not as substitutions.

Opening a cafeteria belongs also to the field of product development. The problem is the financial situation of libraries that makes it often not possible to implement things like that.

Two examples of libraries, where cafeterias have been implemented:

- The library of the Fachhochschule Köln has an integrated cafeteria with the clever name “Ausleih-Bar”.⁵
- The university of Jena has also has an integrated cafeteria, where customers can sit in- and outside the building.⁶

Market development means that current services/products will be offered on new markets. It includes also the “development of *new uses* for existing products” (Johnson/Scholes, 2002, p. 370).

An example for a new use is to train customers directly at their working place. Many customer trainings are offered in the library – why not go to seminars of students to teach them there? At the moment most of the trainings have the content to teach customers how they have to use OPACs or other electronic systems, which have online access. It is therefore absolutely possible to move a training to another place.

Diversification means offering new services/products on a new market. It is “typically defined as a strategy which takes an organisation away from its current markets or products or competences” (Johnson/Scholes, 2002, p. 373). A non-profit organization has a public mission and is subsidized for a specific field. For the academic library is that the clientele of the university and it is not possible to drift away to new markets. Diversification is therefore not a strategy for academic libraries.

Summarized one can say, that the strategies *market penetration* and *service/product development* seem to be the best strategies for an academic library. *Market development* should follow.

⁵ http://www.bibl.fh-koeln.de/virtueller_rundgang/OG1_Cafe.htm [downloaded at 17.04.2003]

⁶ http://www2.uni-jena.de/stw-jena-weimar/de/essentiellen/cafeteria_bibliothek.html

[downloaded at 17.04.2003]

2.4.5.2 Methods

A method is a particular way of doing something to achieve a goal. Methods can be divided into the following three types (Johnson/Sholes, 2002, p. 374):

- Internal development
- Alliances
- Acquisitions

Internal development means that an organization develops a certain strategy on its own and for its own. Each library has its own characteristics, so that each library needs its own strategies. Even if a library develops strategies on its own, it must not forget to look around and use experiences of other libraries.

Alliances are already used in form of consortia, where libraries negotiate together with publishers of (electronic) journals for better price conditions. Another example for an alliance is the development of integrated systems that make it possible to co-operate in cataloguing.

Due to the fact that the cooperation in these fields between academic libraries works very well in Germany, libraries should also think about realizing marketing together as libraries do it in America (see 3.2). Comparable marketing experiences in two or more libraries are always better than only in one. The COMBI-project (see 3.1) was a project performed together by two libraries in Germany, where the same kind of products have been marketed, but nevertheless each library developed also its own strategy.

Hence one can say, that the methods of internal strategy development and building alliances do not exclude, but complement each other.

“*Acquisition* is where an organisation develops its resources and competences by taking over another organisation” (*ibid.*). Academic libraries do not merge. In general, acquisition is not transferable to the non-profit sector, but is a profit sector strategy.

2.4.5.3 Summary

Strategies consist of directions and methods.

Determining a direction the library follows from now on a certain route. By choosing a method the library decides in which way it wants to implement its marketing products and which steps it wants to take. Marketing strategies are therefore the guideline through the marketing process.

2.4.6 Marketing Mix

The “marketing mix” is a general term for the compound of the so-called “4 P’s”. These *Ps* stand for *product*, *price*, *place* and *promotion*.

For the non-profit sector at least two more *Ps* can be defined, which are *process* and *personnel*. De Vries (1997, p. 283) even add two more *Ps*, *politics* and ‘*pakkans*’. The traditional four *P*’s can hence be doubled in the non-profit sector.

Every product or service the library wants to introduce or to improve has to be planned with these marketing instruments. Keiser (1995, p. 51) and Weingand (1998, p. 1-2) have adopted the traditional four *Ps* to the library profession:

- **Product:** the services that are offered to the customers
 - *Question:* What are the benefits of the services for the library’s customers?
- **Price:** the costs to produce a product and also the calculation of user fees
 - *Question:* Should the service be offered for free or do we need user fees?
- **Place:** connection of products/services and customer
 - *Question:* What can be done to make this product/service (more) accessible?
- **Promotion:** communication with customers and presenting products/services
 - *Question:* What can be done to increase the visibility of this product/service?

The four *Ps* correspond to the customers’ four *Cs*: customer solution, customer cost, convenience and communication. The *Cs* show the customers’ view while the *Ps* show the library’s view (Kotler, 2003, p. 17).

The definitions for the following *Ps* are leaned on Kotler (1995) and de Vries (1997):

- **Personnel:** Services are often inseparable, which means that they are synonymous with the people who deliver them. Involving the staff into the marketing process is therefore very important.
- **Process:** Services are often intangible. Librarians and customers are involved in a process in which they both play a role. For delivering an optimised service, service processes have to be optimised.
- **Politics:** Non-profit organizations are dependent upon a higher institution and receive also money for some projects from outside. Therefore good relationships e.g. with the DFG⁷ are important.
- **'Pakkans':** Pakkans is Dutch and means in this case "de kans die een potentiële niet-afnemer van een verplicht product (bijvoorbeeld regelgeving) loopt te worden aangehouden en bestraft voor het niet-afnemen" (de Vries, p. 283). So it is the probability to be caught by doing something punishable.

In this assignment only the four traditional *Ps* will be explained in detail, because they are the most important parts of the marketing mix.

2.4.6.1 Product

The product policy is the most important instrument between all *Ps*. Nowadays it is often designated as the 'heart of modern marketing', which underlines its importance (Zerres, 1999, p.43).

By analysing the current situation with help of SWOT, the customer needs can be discovered in the early beginning. Even the goals that the library wants to achieve are already defined. With them exist also the idea of products that should be improved or even newly implemented.

The library's products are for example

- its collection
- online access to databases, e-journals, virtual libraries
- reference and information services
- customer training

⁷ DFG = Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) has developed a “growth-share matrix”, sometimes also named “BCG matrix”.

+ ↑↑ Market Growth Rate	Stars	Question Marks
	Cash Cow	Dogs
	+ ← Relative Market Share	

Fig. 5 BCG-matrix

This matrix can help to categorize the products and services. The organization can see in which status of the life cycle the products are situated and if they are successful or not.

Stars are the most important products of an organization at the moment. They are the market-leaders in a growing market. The most important service of a library might be the professional reference and information service (Hobohm, 2002, 3/4.7, p.1). In times of information overload this form of information delivering is the service for which a library is well known.

Question Marks cost a lot of money and it is not for sure that they will become Stars. The market is growing fast, but it is not clear if the organization can hold the market-leader position. An example for libraries can be the electronic document delivery, where companies like “Infotrieve” have entered the market and offer not only the document delivery, but also research for information.

Cash Cows are former Stars. They are the basics and the need for marketing is less. The library's local collection fits into this scheme. It is the beginning of all library services and is still the most used service.

Dogs are services with a low share and a declining market. They are probably “near the end” and the organization has to think about if it was better to stop them. The conventional interlibrary loan is a “dog”. It is or will be completely substituted by document delivery systems in the following years.

Products change their position after a while in the matrix. The reason for that lies in the natural life cycle every product or service has. These life cycles reflect the

changing environment around an organization. Hence it is so important to look often not only at positions of certain products, but also at the position of the organization, and as a conclusion to define new strategies regularly.

Every product has got *characteristics*. Services can be cheap, expensive, tangible or intangible, high or low in quality. Much depends on the library's preferences and mission, but also on the customers' needs and wants.

2.4.6.2 Price

The term "price" of a product does not only symbolize the price the customer has to pay. In non-profit organizations it is anyway not normal to pay for each product. Furthermore, prices for intangible services are much harder to calculate than prices for tangible products. Calculating the price of a product/service means to identify cost factors (Weingand, 1997, p. 96). Weingand speaks of direct and indirect costs. Direct costs "can be attributed to specific products, while indirect costs are those expenses that relate to the library's total operations" (*ibid.*). Hence indirect costs include also the costs for the personnel in the library. The information the reference librarian explains to the customer at the information desk is such an intangible service, which is for free for customers, but produces costs for the library.

Price policy is very important in the field of electronic information services, where prices are high, but have to be reduced as much as possible in order to be able to offer them. Not to forget is the importance to ask the customer what he is willing to pay for a service.

2.4.6.3 Place

Place or distribution is the third instrument of the marketing mix. It is concerned with thinking about where and how to deliver services. The technical environment is changing very fast and the use of electronic and virtual information is exploding. The physical place of a library is still important, but more and more library services are offered online and therefore worldwide available. Problems occur with access to databases and e-journals, which are normally only available through the university network. Some e-journals are free, but most of them are so expensive, that libraries

cannot afford to buy many licences. For that reason it is difficult to use them outside the library or campus, except the possibility to log into the network from outside with special authorization.

“Distance learning” is a new key word at universities (Hobohm, 2002, 3/4.8), which affects of course also the services of the academic libraries. If courses are given via the Internet, the literature needed for these courses should also be available online, so that students from Munich can successfully follow a course given in Hamburg.

Actually, the licence problem is at the moment unsolved, but certainly it is one of the most important. Especially for virtual libraries (e.g. NedGuide⁸), presenting Internet based scientific information, it is not possible to handle these problems. Virtual libraries are mainly projects placed in academic libraries and financed for a period of time by institutions like the DFG. Relevant databases bought for those virtual libraries lie on the server of the university and cannot be used from outside the university network.

2.4.6.4 Promotion

Promotion is the instrument that people often equate with the term marketing. An explanation for this matter is that only the part of promotion is visible for customers. Thus promotion is the way an organization communicates with its customers.

Coote (1997, p. 29-38) lists up some ideas of promotion: the library brochure, newsletters, posters, and advertising. Carrying out an open day once a year or once a semester is also a good chance for library users to take a look behind the scenes. Very popular among students are “freecards”, which are postcards with funny or critical content offered in cafeterias, pubs etc.

Promotion costs money of course. Libraries can therefore try to find partners that sponsor the print of posters, handbills etc.

Only if a service sounds interesting to a customer, he will test it. He does not accept to read a brochure that looks more like a scientific article. “KISS” is the method for promotion – **K**eeP **I**t **S**imple and **S**tupid (*ibid.*).

⁸ The portal of the „Virtuelle Fachbibliothek niederländischer Kulturkreis“ is called NedGuide. The university library of Münster is responsible for developing this project (www.nedguide.de)

Also very important is a corporate design, which represents the library. A logo, which is the most significant element of a corporate design, is nowadays a must. It can be used online (website) as well as offline (on all printed media representing the library).

The best way to create e.g. a logo is to involve students. How can it work?

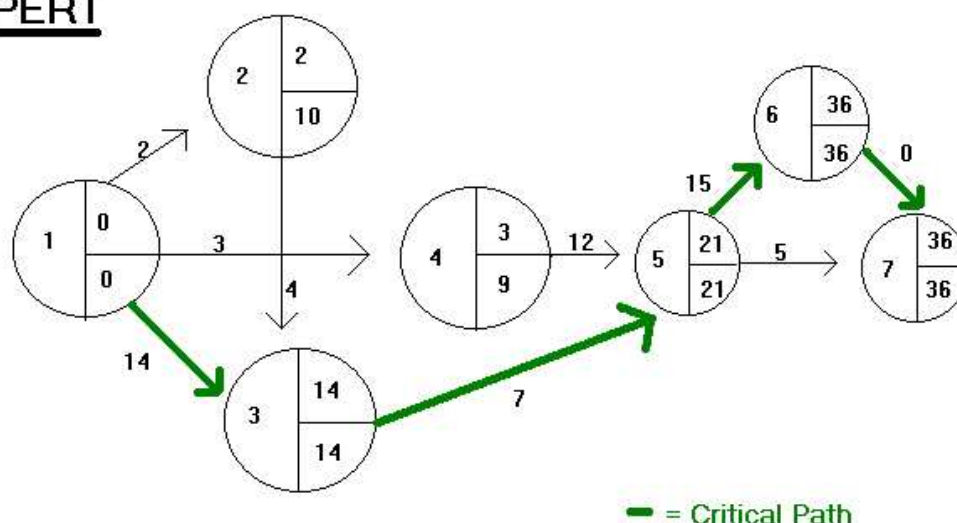
The library can offer a competition for students where they have some weeks time to develop a logo. The best ones will then be shown – maybe in a big hall of the library – and some representatives of the library can choose the winner. An article about the final in the newspaper will be advertising again.

2.4.6.5 Summary

The marketing instruments product, place, price and promotion build together a kind of alliance. They belong together: every product has a price, needs promotion to be known and a place to be used. Intangible services like consultations at information points need furthermore qualified personnel. Good coordinated processes increase the workflow and the image of the library as a fast information deliverer.

2.4.7 Implementation and Evaluation

The two last steps of a strategic marketing plan are the implementation and the evaluation. It is now clear what shall be offered and to whom. If it was not done before, a concrete schedule has now to be defined. That is a project management activity. The schedule “ensures that all needed tasks are done in the right order, done on schedule, and done at the least possible cost. There are a number of valuable scheduling tools, such as PERT [...] for this task.” (Kotler, 1995, p. 426). It “makes it easy to compare the effects alternative actions might have on scheduling and costs” (Robbins/Coulter, 1999, p. 281).

PERT**Fig. 6 PERT**

Explanation for Fig. 6: the number in the left field shows the step number; the number in the field right above the day/week/month of arriving; the number right down the day/week/month you have to leave. The “Critical Path” is the longest sequence.

Implementation is the realization of strategies. It is therefore very important that the communication between all involved persons and departments works in a good way. One person should be in charge to organise it – in other words: one has to control the way of implementation and to make sure that the communication works.

A strategy is valid for some years and, as said before, the development of strategies enables an organization to define a clear route and direction it can follow to achieve goals. During the implementation the library must be aware that it does not lose its direction. Hence it has to evaluate every step. If the results are not satisfying, the library will have to analyse *why* they are not satisfying.

Evaluating is also necessary for being able to cope with the always-changing environment. It can be necessary to change a strategy earlier than expected, because the library has to cope with radical changes, e.g. drastic reduction of the library budget.

2.5 Summary

This description of the development of a general strategic marketing plan with its several steps shows how complex this series is, because many steps have to be undertaken. But the way of marketing planning as it is done in the profit sector is the same as for the non-profit sector.

Many steps with many operations are necessary to achieve goals that make a library stronger and competitive to others. It must be clear that the sequence described is not the one and only. Libraries have the possibility to combine some steps or to change the order. When starting with marketing, libraries probably know already goals they want to achieve. Nevertheless they should not forget to analyse their situation before developing strategies for achieving their goals.

If libraries go together to build strategic alliances, they want to achieve the same goals with one strategy. Alliances are useful for buying journal subscriptions in cooperation. Nevertheless every library is individual and needs as an addition to the shared strategies also individual ones, because positions and missions differ from each other in details.

3 Looking at marketing projects in the library sector

The following part presents two marketing projects:

- The first one is a project in Germany, which was carried out in two academic libraries (Düsseldorf and Magdeburg). It was the first big marketing project in German scientific libraries, and can therefore be seen as a forerunner on this field. The detailed project documentation is written down in three volumes (COMBI, 1998) and presents all results that have been achieved. This assignment can of course not deal with all details of the project and not with both libraries, but some interesting project stages of Düsseldorf are described.
- The second project is a marketing campaign in America with the name “@ *your library*”. The spotlight in this year is set on academic and research libraries. The campaign has its main focus on the promotion of library services and was chosen for this assignment because of America’s early experience on the field of marketing in libraries. All materials are online available and for free, so that libraries all over the world can make use of these information. Besides that it is planned to expand the project world wide, which makes it therefore interesting also for Germany.

To hold the structure of the marketing planning process explained in the chapter before, steps and instruments used in the two projects are printed in *italic* in the following part.

3.1 The COMBI project

3.1.1 Introduction

COMBI is the abbreviation for “Controlling und Marketing in wissenschaftlichen Bibliotheken”. It was a project of the German library institute (DBI)⁹ and sponsored by the Federal Ministry of education, science, research and technology. The project took place in the academic libraries of Düsseldorf (ULB Düsseldorf) and Magdeburg (UB Magdeburg) from September 1995 until October 1998. It had two parts with dif-

⁹ The DBI does not exist anymore and is now called “former” (ehemalig) German library institute = EDBI

ferent topics: the first part was about the competition on the information market and the second part about the management of electronic document delivery.

It was the aim of the project to put theories, which were developed in librarian- and economical literature, into practice (COMBI, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 12).

One focus was also set on internal marketing processes, hence the integration of the whole library staff into the project (*integrated marketing*).

The two project libraries differ from each other: the ULB Düsseldorf is bigger and serves about 29.000 students, faculty and staff, while the UB Magdeburg serves about 10.300. They have a different history and also a different present, and that concludes that they have differences in their missions.

Due to the fact that the Ministry of education financed this project, it was the intention to use the results of the project libraries also in other academic libraries. The two project libraries have therefore an example status.

3.1.2 Realization

First step of both libraries was to define the sequence in the marketing process and they decided to take five steps:

- Defining a mission statement
- Analysing the current situation
- Setting goals and objectives
- Defining marketing instruments
- Evaluation

They first developed a mission and then analysed the current situation.

The *mission* of the ULB Düsseldorf says that they “offer customer-oriented, innovative and high performing services for the university” (COMBI, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 21).

Magdeburg defined that “the library is a customer-oriented service provider at the university with the goal to offer information fast, easily and effectively on a high level for a better customer contentedness for existing but also new customers” (*ibid.*, p. 23).

3.1.2.1 Service improvement in Düsseldorf

For *analysing the current situation*, the ULB Düsseldorf built a planning team with internal and external members. The results showed a first picture of strengths and weaknesses of the library. Afterwards they developed a questionnaire for a campus wide questioning. The library wanted to get a more extended knowledge about their customers' needs, their feelings about the library, and strengths and weaknesses of the library.

The result of the questionnaire was quite positive. The biggest problem that occurs with questionnaires is the bad return.

Goals that could be defined out of this survey were among others to improve

- the photocoppy machine situation
- increasing the opening hours
- the local access of literature
- the interlibrary loan
- the electronic document delivery system

The photocoppy machine situation was easy to solve, because the company, which owns the photocoppy machines, was asked to place five more. It is a good concept to outsource this service, because the library saves costs and has not to care for it.

Increasing opening hours is very difficult for libraries in general, so it was in this case. There is very often not enough personnel available for offering long opening hours. The library tried it out anyway and had to realize that the new opening hours were not used in all parts of the library, but only in some. This demonstrates that a library has to analyse questionnaires very carefully and precise to change things at the right place.

Improving the local access of literature belongs to the strategy *market penetration*. The collection has to be presented in a better way, so that it can be used with more efficiency. The library had to solve an internal problem, because the process of inventory of new book acquisitions was too long. To find out why it took so long, they added a piece of paper in every book and every department working on it wrote the date it arrived and left the department. It was then afterwards possible to see where the workflow did not work well and had to be improved.

The interlibrary loan worked in most parts of Germany during the project still conventionally, that means not electronically. The development of a new technology, which makes the electronic interlibrary loan and electronic document delivery possible, had just started. It was of course a point which customers always were very unsatisfied about, because they had sometimes to wait for many weeks to receive a book or article. The academic library of Düsseldorf was of course restricted in improving the interlibrary loan, because an interlibrary loan concerns at least one more library working with the same technology, and such technologies are developed within the library cooperations. But Düsseldorf tried to improve its own workflow to make the process of interlibrary loans faster.

3.1.2.2 A strategy for promoting document delivery services

The second part of the project was about the introduction and promotion of document delivery systems. In Düsseldorf two services are available: JASON¹⁰ and *Subito*¹¹.

Document delivery services are new services offered on an existing market. Hence it is the strategy of *product/service development*.

JASON is the service of academic libraries only in Northrhine-Westfalia and was introduced in 1995. *Subito* is a service with members all over Germany and also from abroad. It was introduced in 1997. They have some different characteristics:

JASON	SUBITO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delivery service for articles - regional - limited to members of universities NRW - no corporate design, every library has developed an own user interface 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - delivery service for articles and books - international - 4 user groups: 1. students, pupils, (2) commercial users, (3) private individuals, (4) subito library services - corporate design ⇒ access via domain www.subito-doc.de - association (subito – Dokumente aus Bibliotheken e.V.)

Fig. 7 Comparison Jason and Subito

¹⁰ JASON = **J**ournal **A**rticles **S**ent **O**n **D**ema**N**d

¹¹ SUBITO <http://www.subito-doc.de>

One part of the questionnaire, that the COMBI project libraries had developed for their customers, were also questions about these services. The result in Düsseldorf was, that only 24% of the students said they knew JASON, but only 12% also used it. *Subito* was even more unknown: only 9% of the students knew it before the promotion campaign started (COMBI, 1998, Vol. 2, p. 166 f).

Document delivery services for articles are much faster than the conventional interlibrary loans. Hence it was reasonable to promote the new services, so that they could substitute the conventional way.

The ULB Düsseldorf developed therefore a strategic plan for promoting the two products, consisting of defining goals, doing market segmentation, calculating prices and places for the promotion, and setting a time limit for the campaign.

Goals of the promotion were

- to increase the students' knowledge about JASON and *Subito*
- to make the image of the library a better one

Fitting *objectives* for these goals are consequently

- to promote these services with a campaign and
- to qualify the librarians for being able to deliver the required information (even for librarians the services were new)

As outlined before, JASON and *Subito* are two different kinds of document delivery services. The university library had therefore to decide either to decide to promote both services or to put the main emphasis on promoting the regional service JASON. They decided to promote both services.

The *market segmentation* followed and target groups were defined. The customers of the academic library are internal (students, faculty) and external members (private and commercial customers).

Part of the marketing mix is of course also the calculation of a *price* for a service. Costs and time for a document delivery were most valued by students and faculty (COMBI, 1998, Vol.1, p. 121). Students did not like to pay more than 2,50 EURO for one document, but were then willing to wait longer. Faculty on the other hand were willing to pay more in order to receive the document faster. These results show the

importance of segmenting different customer groups, as it is nowadays standard for document delivery services.

The price is also an important factor for the *promotion*. The general problem of the libraries is less money for being able to invest in promotion. Sponsoring is a possibility to overcome this problem. The ULB Düsseldorf was lucky to work together with an advertising agency, which was also responsible to find a sponsor for the library. By this way it was possible to print 50.000 bookmarks, which showed promotion for the document delivery services on the front side and promotion for the sponsor on the back.

The campus of the university was declared as the *place* for the promotion. The library had posters and flyers printed. All these things were spread campus wide, in cafeterias, student houses, and seminars. Furthermore an information brochure had been developed, where the differences between the document delivery systems were explained. The demand for this information brochure was so high, that a second edition had to be printed even during the project.

The services were also promoted on the website of the academic library, e-mails were sent to all members of the university if e-mail-addresses were available, and a newsletter was founded. It was also important to talk about the services, so that an event was organized where the functions of JASON and *Subito* were explained in detail.

Local and regional media could also be used for advertising. In Germany exist very many journals for students. While *Subito* could be promoted German wide, JASON as a regional document delivery service had to be promoted only in NRW.

The *evaluation* showed that the strong promotion was successful. After the campaign, which was run over four months, 42% of the students knew JASON and 20% also used it. *Subito* was known by 28% (former 9%). Students preferred to use JASON if possible, because the prices per document are lower than the prices of *Subito*.

3.1.3 Outlook

The COMBI project was successful for the two project libraries and the project documentation is so detailed that it should actually be possible for other academic

libraries in Germany to use it as a guideline. Nevertheless, German libraries do not learn enough from each other, because they do not occupy themselves with results that exist already. Berens, professor at the university of Düsseldorf, said on a colloquium about marketing in academic libraries in 1998, that the principle “AGABU – Alles ganz anders bei uns” has to retreat (Tröger, 1998).

Libraries might think that the financing is their biggest problem. As mentioned before, the Ministry of education financed the COMBI project and the two libraries had three years to make experiences with marketing. These three years were just the beginning, because outcomes are still recognizable. That demonstrates again, that marketing strategies need time and are made for the long term.

However, the project shows, that marketing is a chance for libraries to learn new ways of calculating their services and getting to know their customers better. Libraries must understand, that marketing does not only cost money, but helps to achieve advantages on the market.

3.2 Marketing in America

Even if it was not yet called “marketing”, first ideas about marketing concepts were developed in America in the early beginning of the 20th century.¹² Already in 1896, librarians talked at the ALA¹³ Conference about advertising the library. One year later the “management” concept was introduced. (In comparison with the American situation Germany started very much later. Words like “advertising” and “public relations” appeared first in the 1960s, but only in context for public libraries.) But also in America the real development of marketing strategies for libraries started with Kotler’s book “Marketing for non-profit organizations” in 1977 (Renborg, 2000, p. 8). This book was used in American library schools and the discussion, development and introduction of marketing library services started in a modern way, i.e. concepts and strategies were introduced and advertising and public relations were from now on only a part of the whole marketing concept.

¹² Renborg (2000) describes in a short way the history of marketing library services in her paper “Marketing Library Services. How it all began”, in: *Adapting Marketing to Libraries in a Changing and World-wide Environment*, 2000, p. 5-12

¹³ ALA = American Library Association

But why did America start earlier with the development of marketing strategies? An answer might be, that America is always faster in using and developing new concepts on all fields. A more precise reason is probably that libraries or cultural institutions in America are not subsidized in the way they are supported in Germany and always have to fight more for their existence.

3.2.1 The marketing campaign “@ your library™”

The situation on the information market is nowadays comparable all over the world. New technologies bring the effect of a connected world and libraries have to deal with information overload and the problem how to help their customers to deal with so much available information. ACRL¹⁴ and ALA developed together the national marketing campaign “@ your library™”, which started in 2001.

But even if the main focus of this campaign lies on the promotional part, the marketing steps “behind the scenes” is also working. Thus “@ your library™” works together with 3M Library Systems¹⁵, an international company developing security services for libraries. 3M supports the campaign and offers on its website tips and resources for writing a marketing plan. An official logo has been developed that guides through the campaign and can be used by each participating library:



Fig. 8 Official logo of the campaign “@ your library™”

In this current year 2003 the spotlight of the campaign is set on academic and research libraries:

“The reality is that in today's complex information environment, we have a greater responsibility to communicate the resources and expertise our libraries and librarians provide on our campuses and in society. [...] Academic and research librarians play

¹⁴ ACRL = Association of College and Research Libraries

¹⁵ 3M Library Systems <<http://www.3m.com>>

an essential role not only in higher education and research, but also in the collection and preservation of our nation's literary, cultural, and historical heritage. Increasing our visibility and better communicating the value of what we do and what our libraries offer will benefit all who depend upon these services." (The Campaign for America's Libraries, Toolkit 2003, p. 2)

Summarized one can say that the campaign shall help academic libraries to find and define new positions in a changing environment and to communicate these new positions to their customers.

3.2.2 Organization

America is a huge country and for being able to organize a national campaign, one central information point has to be determined. Nowadays it is a matter of course to use the Internet for that. The website www.ala.org/@yourlibrary is designed as a portal where America's librarians can find ideas and strategies for communicating their products to their customers.

As an addition to the website, an open mailing list¹⁶ has been founded, where subscribed librarians can actively participate and post their marketing experiences or questions. Thus they can share "best practices" and learn from each other – not only about marketing strategies that work, but maybe also about strategies that might not work.

Training materials are available online as PDF-files, e.g. the Facilitator Guide "Strategic Marketing in Academic and Research Libraries" (<http://www.3M.com/library/documents>), which explains very detailed strategic marketing methods. Librarians can read how they can organize workshops and which materials they need for that.

3.2.3 Realization

3.2.3.1 The campaign in America

The *analysis of the current situation* was the first step that had to be undertaken for starting the campaign. Due to the fact that the campaign is a nation wide campaign,

¹⁶ ACRL Campaign for Libraries <ACADEMICPR@ala.org>

the “ALA Taskforce” engaged a research firm called “KRC Research”, a “full-service public opinion and market research firm of Weber Shandwick” (ACRL/ALA Report of Findings, 2002, p. 1). This firm has carried out “twelve in-depth interviews with faculty and administrators of college and research institutions and four groups of college and university students” (*ibid.*).

The principle “think customer”, as outlined in chapter 2.1 of this assignment, plays here again the main role. Students, faculty and administrators were asked in this questionnaire about their opinion and content about the situation of academic libraries and librarians in America. The result was, that all customers think that academic libraries are important institutions, but need more help from librarians to find their way through the “information overload”.

Differences were found in information skills of graduate and undergraduate students, because “graduate students, faculty, and administrators are much more connected to and knowledgeable of their institution’s libraries and librarians, and tend to use these resources more often and in a more sophisticated way than do most undergraduate students” (ACRL/ALA Executive summary, 2002, p. 2).

“Most all of the participants believe that librarians primarily play a support role – finding them the information or resources they need in the most efficient way. They do not tend to see librarians as educated professionals who play an active role in the academic community.” (*ibid.*, p. 3)

As a result of this nation wide questionnaire, the *goals* of this campaign are

- to increase the attractiveness of all kinds of libraries,
- to make services more visible to users,
- to “update the image of libraries and librarians of the 21st century”.
- to increase library usage
- to increase funding for libraries
- to bring librarians at one table for discussing about current problems and to share ideas¹⁷

¹⁷Goals and Objectives

http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Our_Association/Offices/Public_Information/Campaign_for_Americas_Libraries/About_@_your_libraryTM/Goals_and_Objectives.htm
[downloaded at 10.04.2003]

After having defined the goals, the academic libraries themselves have to develop own strategies to improve their services. The material offered on the websites of ALA and 3M give instructions how to organize workshops for librarians to improve their knowledge, because the *personnel* in a library is the representative of a library. And the questionnaire among students revealed that librarians are often seen only as support staff, but not as educated professionals (ACRL/ALA Executive summary, 2002, p. 4).

Ideas for *promotion of services and products* are always difficult to find: the message has to be short, but effective. Here are some examples of messages participating libraries can use (Facilitator Guide, 2002, p. 27):

Get connected @ your library^{TMTM}
Globally connected @ your library^{TMTM}
Einstein you mind @ your library^{TMTM}
Discover a World of Information @ your library^{TMTM}
Deliver it @ your library^{TMTM}
Get help @ your library^{TMTM}
Join a learning community @ your libraryTM
Browse @ your libraryTM
Information central @ your libraryTM
Cure your information blues @ your libraryTM
Become workplace-ready @ your libraryTM
Find yourself @ your libraryTM
Find it in person @ your libraryTM
Touch the future @ your libraryTM
Information rules @ your libraryTM
Begin here @ your libraryTM
Find an expert @ your libraryTM
Insure student's information literacy @ your libraryTM

Summarized one can say that this project is very extensive and offers a lot of material. Nevertheless, participating in this campaign should only be seen as an addition to a marketing concept planned by the library itself. Even the very detailed instructions of carrying out workshops have to be adapted to each library – it is not possible to perform workshops everywhere in the same manner.

3.2.3.2 The Campaign for the World's Libraries

Based on the campaign in America, the IFLA launched in 2001 the "Campaign for the World's Libraries"¹⁸ The logo was adapted and translated into the official IFLA languages, which are English, German, French, Russian and Spanish, but also to others like Arabic, Chinese and Bulgarian.



Fig.9 Official translations of the American logo "@ your library™"

The worldwide campaign has mainly the same messages and aims as the American one. The IFLA says:

- "Libraries are changing and dynamic places.
- Libraries are places of opportunity.
- Libraries bridge the world." (www.ifla.org/@yourlibrary/index.htm)

However, the international campaign has not started in the extent as the American campaign, but hopefully it will have the same success. It is a big chance for the libraries world wide to share their experiences and to underline their importance.



Fig. 10 Official banner of the world wide campaign "@ your library™"

¹⁸ see the fact sheet "The Campaign for the World's Libraries" on the IFLA website <http://www.ifla.org/@yourlibrary/index.htm> [downloaded at 11.04.2003]

3.3 Conclusion

The described projects differ from each other, because they are conceived for different countries and levels. While the COMBI project was carried out in two specific libraries in Germany with specific goals, the campaign “@ your libraryTM” is a general campaign with general goals for any library in America.

Marketing strategies differ very much from each other and depend always on the organization’s goals that shall be achieved. The projects show furthermore, that not only the promotional aspect of marketing is an important aspect, but that the marketing steps before have to be planned very carefully. Hence, libraries that keep themselves busy with developing marketing strategies have to understand, that they have to improve their internal workflow and the knowledge of their staff in order to be successful.

The definition of Johnson/Scholes mentioned in 2.2, that “strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term, which achieves advantage for the organisation through its configuration of resources within a changing environment and to fulfil stakeholder expectations” confirms to be true: the COMBI project had an official time scale of three years, but it was not possible for the authors of the project documentation to conclude final results, because new outcomes are still visible and have to be analysed.

4 Marketing of "Information Literacy"

4.1 Defining Information Literacy

The changing environment in the field of information technology makes it necessary that all kind of learners are taught in working with every form of electronic information. The assumption that working with the computer makes the procedure of finding relevant literature easier is not right. It is the other way round: electronic resources have become an addition to traditional information and the jungle of information, which can sometimes also result in an information overload, is increasing. Since the nineties the development of digital information has been rapidly increased: the Internet connects resources from all over the world, and all kind of databases and e-journals are available. Librarians as information specialists have therefore a special mission to improve their customers' information literacy.

Information literacy is

"A new liberal art that extends from knowing how to use computers and access information to critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure, and its social, cultural and even philosophical context and impact" (Shapiro/Hughes 1996)

Information literacy means the ability to locate, evaluate and effectively use information to gain knowledge.

4.2 The current situation of education in Germany

Several studies concerning information literacy have been carried out in Germany during the last years. The PISA study is probably the most well known. It tested the skills of pupils in secondary schools in Europe. Germany was closely ranked at the end of all countries. The bad educational situation was known before, but this study put the tin lid on it and politicians called for strong educational reforms. However, pupils of secondary schools will later be students at universities and colleges. The situation at universities is mostly the same, because skills that have not been taught during secondary school education do not suddenly appear at the university when nobody is there who is teaching them.

Information literacy is so important for students, because they have to use online catalogues, subject-oriented databases, and e-journals for doing research. They can

find additional information by search engines like Google or just browsing the Internet. Klatt (2001, p. 2) underlines the importance of teaching information literacy: "Undoubtedly, competences in searching for and in using digital information have already become a major factor in the competition of universities".

In April 2000 the Federal Ministry of Education and Research engaged the "Sozialforschungsstelle Dortmund Landesinstitut" in cooperation with the University of Dortmund and Gaus mbH to find out the information literacy skills in academic education in Germany. The results¹⁹ were shattering: 64,1% try to find needed information by using the "free search" in search engines, followed by e-mailing with other students. Only 16,2% said that they search in libraries' online catalogues; online-databases are used by only 6,2%. Most of the students (79,6%) get their knowledge by trial and error or by asking fellow students, and only a minority (15,7%) has learned to use digital information with help of library staff.

Librarians have therefore to become stronger partners of students and have to be involved in the education.

4.3 Tutorials

Many categories of tutorials or customer trainings already exist in libraries. They are meanwhile again a main service of academic libraries. But as facts and figures of the SteFI-survey show, tutorials are rarely used or known by students. This is not only a fault made by libraries, but also made by the professors teaching at universities. They have to force their students to participate in tutorials. In America tutorials are integrated into the curriculum of students and they get credit points for them. This method is also discussed in Germany²⁰, but has not been implemented yet. A big problem of tutorials is that they are mostly not subject-oriented, which would be different if they were implemented in the curriculum.

¹⁹ More results of the study can be found on www.stefi.de

²⁰ „Just-in-time-Mentalität bei Studenten“ was an e-mail-topic that was posted in the German mailinglist of librarians (INETBIB) in May 2003. Librarians discussed very engaged about Information- and library literacy. It can be found in the archive on <http://www.ub.uni-dortmund.de/Listenarchive/INETBIB/200305/20030505.html>

4.4 Marketing for tutorials

Actually, information literacy itself cannot be seen as a service of a library, because it is a skill one has to learn. Therefore information literacy itself cannot be marketed, but the services that help to *achieve* information literacy can be marketed, which are tutorials and other actions that help customers to get these skills. So, if we speak of marketing for information literacy, one has to think about the services that lead to this ability and that have to be improved.

4.4.1 Analysis of the current situation

As outlined in the second chapter, the analysis of the current situation is the first step of the planning process. The internal and external environments have to be analysed using the SWOT analysis. The library should build a group consisting of internal members (librarians belonging to the middle-management, who are already giving tutorials and managers of the higher management, who are in charge of financial aspects and/or are experts with specialized knowledge of their subjects) and external members (teaching staff and professors at the university).

The analysis of the internal environment should give answers to the questions

- What do we already offer in which form for improving customers' information literacy? (Online-tutorials, normal tutorials)
- What is the capacity of tutorials?
- How many librarians are involved in teaching customers?
- How do these librarians improve their skills? Which possibilities do they have?
- How many percent of our budget do we spent on developing tutorials (financial aspect)?

The analysis of the external environment should give answers to the questions

- How do university and library work together in improving information literacy?
How does the external environment see the library?
- What do customers think of tutorials?
- What do customers think about the help of librarians by searching for literature?

Even if many relevant studies concerning information literacy exist at the moment, the specific library should develop an own survey to get an overview about the internal, university specific situation. External studies are of course a value adding support.

Political-legal and technological trends are the most important influences of the macro environment. Political-legal influences on the one hand, because educational reforms are planned and academic libraries belong to the educational institution "university". Technological trends on the other hand, because the fast growth of technological developments makes it necessary to keep up.

4.4.2 Market analysis

The analysis of the current situation has already shown the customer behaviour for services concerning information literacy. Only a few customers obtain these skills and only a few, who follow tutorials, realize that they need these skills. The public interest is there through national and international studies, and the topic is discussed on all political levels. The market situation is therefore quite good and the public discussion will help to make customers sensible for this topic. The increasing development of electronic information implies the need for being able to cope with it, so that teaching how to get relevant information increases, too. On the product life cycle the services supporting gaining information literacy are therefore in the stage of growing. But the fact that many customers do not follow tutorials also shows that the way of carrying them out has to be revised.

Many projects for improving information literacy of library customers have already been developed. The following examples are considered to be best practices for the field of online-tutorials:

1. **Der schlaue Det** ²¹ is a general online-tutorial developed for students using the library of the Fachhochschule Hamburg. The tutorial shall give them help for the orientation in the library, but also teach them how to use electronic resources for their studies.

²¹ www.det.informationskompetenz.net [downloaded at 06.05.2003]

2. **Politics and peace guide** is an online-tutorial developed by the virtual libraries for political science and peace studies²². The tutorial is subject-oriented and helps customers to gain knowledge in finding relevant political information. Aim of the course is that customers know which search instrument they should use for which research.

4.4.3 Market segmentation

The market can first be segmented into two groups: students and lecturers.

"One half of the lecturers (49,9%) thinks that further education in using digital scientific information should be installed for the lecturers themselves as well" (Klatt, 2001, p. 9).

Students have again to be segmented into groups:

1. the level of information literacy is different, i.e. there is a discrepancy between beginners and advanced students
2. different study-course directions need different knowledge of e.g. databases

As already cited in 2.4.2, Kotler defined differentiated marketing as the way "an organization decides to operate in two or more segments of the market but designs separate offerings or marketing programs for each." (1995, p. 182). This way of marketing should be used for information literacy according to different needs of each group.

4.4.4 Goals and objectives

It has to be distinguished between internal (staff-oriented) and external (customer-oriented) goals. The staff-oriented goal is very important, because only if the personnel of the library has the knowledge for teaching its customers, the library will be successful.

²² „Virtuelle Fachbibliotheken Politikwissenschaft und Friedensforschung“
URL: www.pp-guide.de/tutorial/index.htm [downloaded at 08.05.2003]

Staff-oriented goal:

Goal: the information service must be improved

Objective: send staff to workshops

Customer-oriented goal:

Goal: the information literacy of students and lecturers at the university must be improved by offering trainings

Objective: existing tutorials have to be improved and new tutorials have to be developed

4.4.5 Formulating strategies

The library has now to think about the direction of its strategies. Due to the fact, that it has always been a mission of the library to offer customer trainings and to help customers at the information desk, the *market penetration* is the first strategy the library should follow. Again the explanation for it: an existing product/service will be established on an existing market. There are of course tutorials given and they should be established by promoting them to the customers. But they must also be improved and new kinds of tutorials have to be developed. The development of new kinds of tutorials will then belong to the *product/service development* strategy.

The improvement is a good task for an internal development. But in general libraries should think about building alliances to develop new ways of offering tutorials. Students in Germany have in general all the same problems with information literacy – it does not matter where they study. Thus it is more efficient to work together as libraries do it already in other fields of their work, e.g. in cataloguing. Alliances have also to be built with the educational institutions at universities, at least, if tutorials will be a part of the curricula.

The discussion in Germany about embedding tutorials into curricula of students is already thirty years old (Homann, 2001, p. 2), but has never been realized until now. Libraries should try now to find a way to realize it. They can get ideas in America,

where this method of embedding tutorials into curricula is already working.²³ Librarians should work with students during seminars, because they could then help to give subject-oriented help. It won't be easy, but it is necessary. Tutorials do not have to be carried out in the library itself as it is at the moment normally done. Not the customer has always to come to the library, but the library goes to the customer and enters a new marketplace. If librarians teach outside the library and act as good representatives, they will be able to reach new customers, who have never entered a library before.

Summarized one can say, that the library's strategies should be:

- Improving tutorials and offering different kinds of tutorials: online-tutorials and normal tutorials. Normal tutorials again must be split into short tutorials of about two hours, day tutorials of about seven or eight hours, and semester tutorials that have a duration of a whole semester.
- Building alliances with other libraries and educational institutions for developing new services. Only working together on political and educational level can make educational reforms successful.
- Customers must be aware of the problem "information literacy". Hence promotion of the services will be very important

Strategies are for the long-term, so that the library has to set a time limit for their marketing activities. The development of embedded tutorials will take much time, because library and educational institutions have to work together. At least six months should be planned for it before the new tutorials should enter the market. Teaching librarians should get the possibility for own trainings during this time. The library can use the PERT method to plan the details (see *Appendix 2*). First results may be expected after having carried out the first tutorials, which refers then to their duration. But gaining information literacy takes a lot of time, so that studies about the improvement of information literacy might be expected in two or three years.

²³ The ALA has developed information literacy standards for higher education. These standards are available on http://www.ala.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Standards_and_Guidelines [downloaded 1.05.2003]

4.4.6 Marketing Mix

4.4.6.1 Product and price

The marketing mix used in the non-profit sector combines the aspects of product, price, place, promotion, personnel and process.

The products for improving information literacy are tutorials in different forms, namely online-tutorials and "normal" tutorials given by librarians or other teaching staff. These two products or better services need also a different calculation: the costs for online-tutorials are lower than those for normal tutorials.

- Costs for online-tutorials: development, hosting, review
- Costs for normal tutorials: (training for librarians), librarian, materials for the tutorial, costs for facilities

So, once developed, an online-tutorial is cheaper than a normal tutorial, but should nevertheless only be an additional service, because computers cannot substitute the aspect of being taught by a person. The materials needed for the tutorials are probably very expensive, so that customers should pay the costs (e.g. for copies) or it is maybe possible to find a sponsor, who finances this project. "As a general rule, customers value what they pay for, and pay for what they value." (Coote, 1997, p. 19) Thus, if customers have the feeling that the tutorial they follow will support their education, they will pay for it.

4.4.6.2 Promotion and place

The campaign "*@ your library™*" provides the following slogans that fit into the context of information literacy (Facilitator Guide, 2002, p. 27):

Insure students' information literacy @ your library™

Student achievement begins @ your library™

Research made easy @ your library™

Information overload? Sort it out @ your library™

The statements are short and draw the attention. They can be printed on bookmarks, added to newsletters and e-mails and so on. If German libraries participate in the worldwide campaign of "*@ your library™*" these slogans might be translated into German. But it is of course possible to develop own slogans of this kind:

- **Google fragen ist gut - aber da gibt's noch mehr in deiner Bibliothek!**

- **Uni-Sport mal anders: erwerbe Informationskompetenz in deiner Bibliothek!**

Tutorials should be announced furthermore on the library's website with a short description of content and level. If an online-tutorial exists, the normal tutorials should be announced there, too.

Flyers and posters can be spread on the campus, and advertisements in student magazines are also useful.

Librarians working at the information desk should also speak about tutorials if students come and have questions that show that they need to gain information literacy.

4.4.7 Implementation and evaluation

As said before, the implementation of these strategies will take at least six months and first results can be expected after having carried out the first new structured tutorials. The library should develop an evaluation form, which the participants can fill in after every lesson or course. It is then certainly interesting to compare the feedback of the different kinds of tutorials.

However, the first results can only be seen as the beginning of solving the problem of information literacy in that specific university. Solving this problem in Germany will probably take years, but it is absolutely necessary to start solving it now.

4.5 Conclusion

On the one hand it is possible to create a marketing plan for marketing the services dealing with information literacy. On the other hand information literacy itself is an availability that is hard to measure. Students have different levels of information literacy and their own estimation about it is very subjective. It is therefore hard to develop tutorials that serve as many customers as possible, but that are nevertheless interesting and useful for all of them.

New studies will show at last, if strategies like these will help to improve students' information literacy. But if German academic libraries start it in a way American libraries' have been dealing with that problem already for years, it will be a good beginning.

5 Conclusion

The general marketing planning process, which is used both in profit and non-profit organizations has been adapted in this assignment to German academic libraries. One can see, that the development and implementation of marketing strategies is nowadays a very helpful instrument in order to be able to react on the changing environment and to plan the future of academic libraries. On the one hand strategies shall be valid for some years, but on the other hand there is an always-changing environment, which causes that strategies have regularly to be renewed, too. The self-assessment at the beginning of a marketing planning process and the evaluation after the implementation are therefore very essential steps.

Three kinds of strategies are interesting for academic libraries: market penetration, product/service development and market development. Market penetration and service development can be seen as the main strategies, because they refer to the already existing services of the library. The strategy of market development is useful for developing new uses of products. These strategies are compatible with the libraries' missions, while diversification is not compatible, because libraries have to fulfil their public mission, which is to serve the clientele of the universities they belong to and not to enter completely new markets.

The COMBI project shows that libraries in Germany have successfully begun to implement marketing strategies. It is necessary to continue with these kinds of "big" projects and to document them as it was done with this one. That is the only way to learn from each other and to develop together new marketing concepts for the future. Working out this assignment showed me, that the articles dealing with marketing strategies published in Germany's library sector are very general and cannot be used as guidelines. Marketing is still not a matter of course and more discussed on a theoretical level instead of a practical one. American literature on the other hand offers many practical guidelines and helps for libraries, which want to implement marketing strategies in their institution. This is one reason why German libraries should participate in the international "Campaign for the World's Libraries", because they can gain new knowledge from abroad. Another reason is that this campaign will help that all German academic libraries together, as a big alliance, develop marketing strategies for their sector.

The students' problem of information literacy must be seen today as a central problem of academic libraries, because the students belong to the main customers. With taking this example of marketing for information literacy and the development of a strategic plan for it, this assignment has underlined that marketing planning processes are in general the same for all services. Libraries should use it for all their products and services, because if academic libraries do not react and renew their services with help of marketing, they will risk falling behind and with them due to their not to be underestimated educational function also the education in Germany.

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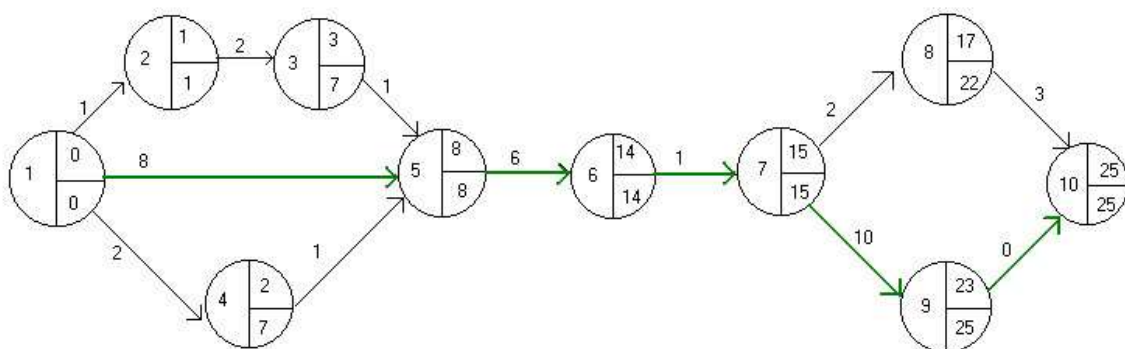
Appendices

1. PERT schedule for “Information Literacy” (tutorial improvement)
2. A poster belonging to the American marketing campaign “@ your libraryTM”

Appendix 1

PERT schedule for “Information Literacy” (tutorial improvement)

Steps	Activity	Weeks
1 – 2	Development survey	1
1 – 4	Analysing external studies	2
1 – 5	Building “taskforce”	8
2 – 3	Carry out survey	2
3 – 5	Summarize results	1
4 – 5	Summarize results	1
5 – 6	Working out concept for new/improved tutorials	6
6 – 7	Instructions for teaching librarians	1
7 – 8	Implementation	2
7 – 9	Promotion	10
8 – 10	First evaluations	3
9 – 10	zeroline	0



→ Critical Path

Appendix 2

Exciting things happen @ your library™

Students learn to
find, evaluate, and
use information.

Faculty and
librarians
collaborate on
teaching and
research.

Cutting-edge
technology expands
access to global
resources.



Who makes it all happen?
Your FAU librarians—
the ultimate search engines
@your library™



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